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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH		REVIEWED BY		DATE	
FROM	Ambassador	Helsinki	283		
TO	THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON		REASON(S)	October 28, 1958	
REF	EmbDes Nos. 271, Oct. 24, and 261, Oct. 21; Joint Weeks No. 43, Oct. 24.		DATE OCT 29 1958		
ACTION		DEPT. OF STATE			
For Dept.	EUR 5	IN R/R, I/R, F, S/P-1, 2/0-1, 2/0P-1			
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10/31		CIA-15, OSD-4, ARMY-4, NAVY-3, OCB-1, USA-10			

SUBJECT: Signs of Official Concern, Disunity over Soviet Relations

Passage of October 27, the date the Finnish Government admitted to having proposed to the Soviets for beginning trade agreement negotiations in Moscow, without any sign of a response, was marked by opposition newspapers as confirmation of their earlier predictions that the Fagerholm Government would be incapable of handling relations with the USSR. While ostensibly supporting the Government, the Agrarian Party press has now fully joined in this comment at the Cabinet's expense. Officially, the Government maintained its pose of unconcern over signs of Soviet psychological pressure, but official actions and comment in the pro-Government press revealed more and more that it was merely "whistling in the dark".

The actions taken by the Government were three, all aimed at eliminating any pretext for further Soviet complaints about appearance of anti-Soviet materials in Finnish media. On October 22, reportedly on the advice of the Foreign Ministry, Tammi Publishing Co. withdrew the book it had been about to publish of the memoirs of Yrjö Leino, Communist Interior Minister ousted in 1948 in connection with an alleged plan for a coup against the Government. Informed observers consider that the Foreign Ministry's action resulted from Soviet initiative, possibly conveyed when a group of Finnish Communist leaders called on Prime Minister Fagerholm, supposedly on another matter, less than a week before the book was cancelled. In a parallel action revealed October 24, the State Film Censorship Board refused to permit public exhibition of the West German film "Doctor of Stalingrad" which had been condemned in the USSR as anti-Soviet.

Fagerholm himself undertook further to reassure the Soviets of his Government's good intentions on October 23 when, in an address in observance of United Nations Day (full text forwarded by Despatch No. 284), he deplored both the criticism of the Soviet Union that caused trouble in Fenno-Soviet relations, and the opponents of the Government who rejoiced at the existence of such trouble. He stressed the degree to which Finland's foreign policy had become firmly established by describing it in the same words—now became a litany—that had been used on similar occasions by himself in 1956 and by Prime Minister Sukselainen in 1957. In speaking of Finnish criticism of the Soviets, Fagerholm referred to people who did not know any better than to damage the national interests in "words or pictures". The latter was taken as a reference to the entry of "Helsingin Sanomat's" cartoonist virtuoso, Kari Suomaa, in the contest sponsored by the "Council of Captive Nations"—a "Volga Boatman" drawing of Khrushchev lashing a team of eastern Europeans harnessed to his river barge, while shouting, "Shame on you, imperialist," at Uncle Sam.

GCHilliker:ejj

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Suomalainen's employer replied that Soviet displeasure was apparent some time ago and could hardly be attributed to recent occurrences.

A new rash of editorial comment was provoked on October 26 by appearance in the October issue of "Kyntäjä", the Agrarian Party (ostensibly youth) magazine, of a discussion of the Paasikivi-Kekkonen foreign policy (enclosure). Under the pen-name "Mikko Miekka" which "Helsingin Sanomat" hinted might belong to Matti Kekkonen, Agrarian Diet Member and son of the President, the article claimed that that policy had already been violated in some respects. Without directly blaming the Fagerholm Government, it condemned the "over-simplification" of foreign policy that had permitted publishers and critics (mostly Conservative) to sensationalize on recent anti-Soviet memoirs and the "Leskinen Social Democrats" to claim credit for having invented the Paasikivi line. The article concluded with a lecture on the complexity of Finland's foreign relations and the need for understanding the relevance thereto of Soviet thinking, which understanding could not be acquired without knowledge of Paasikivi's memoirs (see EmbDes No. 662, May 13, 1958).

Conservative "Uusi Suomi" and Communist "Kansan Uutiset" both replied to the "Kyntäjä" article on October 26 by disputing the implied Agrarian claim to a monopoly over foreign policy, the former citing the origin by their "Old Finn" forebears under the Grand Duchy of the policy of "getting along with Russia", while the Communists took credit for bettering Soviet relations immediately after World War II.

Amid this quibbling over partisan virtues, Agrarian "Maakansa" presented perhaps its strongest counsel thus far for a policy of subordinating all other considerations to the requirements of maintaining smooth relations with the Soviets. Startled from Hammarström's assertion that the danger of dissension and the significance of cooperation had never been more evident, "Maakansa" ticked off the danger spots—Suez, Lebanon and Taiwan Straits—where recently "world peace has been . . . directly threatened". With the conclusion that world tension will continue and might reach the snapping point, the editorial brought the matter home to Finland thus:

~~Finland's Position~~

"This continual and ever increasing danger of the world political situation cannot help affecting also our country. We have pledged ourselves—or, should we say, we have gotten the right—to remain outside conflicts and disputes between the great powers. It is most important for us to act in conformity with this recognized neutral position of ours. We must be able to take care of all our political affairs in such a manner that the position of our country will not be weakened and endangered. The demands placed on our foreign policy must not be weighed with respect to the present moment alone, although even it is critical. We must keep a keen eye on the dangerous factors that manifest themselves when political pressure becomes even more critical and threatening. We must not forget for a moment the demands made on our foreign policy by the delicate position of our country. Relations with the Soviet Union are a vital question to the Finnish people, J.K. Paasikivi often pointed out. This always holds good and to all the greater degree the more threatening the general political situation in the world becomes."

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Just what the Agrarian formula might be for relieving the present tension with the Soviets has not been clearly stated in public. The implication is plain in the critical attitude of "Maakansa", however, that at least the radical element of the party (including most of its bureaucrats and presidential intimates) would be quite ready to have the Fagerholm Cabinet fall, or at least undergo drastic reorganization. Thus, on October 28, the Editor-in-Chief commented in his column on the report that SD Trade Minister Hiltunen had told the press that the Soviet invitation to trade talks surely would come "in time":

"What will 'in time' be. This month, this year or the beginning of next year? Or - not at all while the present government is in office?"

For the Ambassador:

Grant G. Hilliker

Grant G. Hilliker
Second Secretary of Embassy

Enclosure: *Att*

Translation of "Kyntäjä" article.

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Doc. No. 283

From Helsinki

Helsinki, "Helsingin" October 1950

Finland's Foreign Policy Threatened with Over-simplification? - by Risto Rintala

It is a well-known fact that the foreign policy of Finland can be described as a balance between two main lines of action. This line of action is the maintenance of Finland's independence and the other is the maintenance of Finland's foreign policy in the framework of the relations with the Soviet Union. In this lies the fundamental basis of the Finnish foreign policy. It is against this basis that all our decisions in foreign policy must be made. It is not a question of whether we begin speaking in general or in detail and in general or in detail. There has already been a departure in some degree from the Finnish-Soviet foreign policy. Under the new line of action...

The people of Finland have sometimes felt a sense which has prevented them from accepting with all their heart this foreign policy orientation of course which is the only right one. Our history is short and when unrealistic trials are added thereto - or at least up to now have been added thereto - the intellectual atmosphere has not been without blame for the profound endorsement of the Finnish-Soviet foreign policy. We hope we are right in supposing that this particular foreign policy of ours is completely understood by certain far-sighted liberal-minded circles and that it is understood by thousands of ordinary citizens, mainly in the cities. There are hardly any more than these, but no opportunity should be left unused to increase their number. Their increase is possible because just this material and the highest material, scientific, artistic and literary and such materials will the future of Finland be built upon.

Our foreign policy line is threatened by over-simplification. The persons who were responsible for our foreign policy during the 1930's are now heard in the Diet and in the Foreign Affairs Committee. The forceful presentation by the same persons led to the birth of the third Paasikivi government in which the Finnish Social Democrats and the Conservatives have the majority. Although these representatives are in principle a genuine segment of the people, the danger is that they will over-simplify the foreign policy line.

During the 1930's the leading foreign policy propagandists of the 1930's. They are according to their convictions and their wishes are ardent. It is only regrettable that their convictions are not in keeping with the foreign policy interests of our country. Their foreign policy is "bad foreign policy", as Paasikivi in his memoirs said of our foreign policy in the 1930's. Few there are who think that these men recognize their errors of two decades ago and are now "new men". The leading foreign policy propagandists of the Finnish Social Democrats in the last few years must be recalled. They have claimed in their speeches and in their writings that this Paasikivi-Soviet foreign policy is nothing but the acceptance of the Social Democratic foreign policy program, which program they, the Finnish Social Democrats, have followed throughout this century. This is dangerous. Paasikivi was not of that opinion and if the people begin to believe these false claims they have departed in dangerous degree from the Paasikivi-Soviet foreign policy. After the war a really new foreign policy trend began in our country, which differed sharply from the previous line.

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